

Classification: Public
Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Council
Date: 22 June 2021
Reporting officer: Stuart Bobby, Chief Executive
Subject: Working in Partnership Framework – June 2021

Purpose and summary of report:

To present Full Council with an updated *Working in Partnership Framework* for Gravesham Borough Council for adoption.

Recommendations:

Council adopts the *Working in Partnership Framework*, attached at appendix two, for incorporation into the Council's Policy Framework.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In April 2019, Council adopted an updated *Working in Partnership Framework* for the council, with clear guidelines to review the framework every three years or when it is prudent to do so.
- 1.2 Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes to the way in which the council has been required to operate in order to respond to the pandemic, it was felt that it would be prudent to review the Framework to ensure it is still 'fit for purpose'. It was also felt that it would be necessary to review the Framework to ensure it reflects current and future working arrangements in relation to partnerships and joint working arrangements.
- 1.3 The review that has been undertaken has been a comprehensive review of the policy in its entirety and as such, following Cabinet's consideration at its meeting on 01 June 2021, Cabinet's recommendation was for Council to adopt the new *Working in Partnership Framework*.
- 1.4 In addition to Cabinet consideration, the draft framework has also been considered by Members of the Performance & Administration Cabinet Committee.

2. Review and update of the Working in Partnership Framework

- 2.1 Appendix two to the report sets out the revised Framework (and accompanying appendices) for the council.
- 2.2 Specific changes that have been made are as follows:
 - 2.2.1 Amendments to the definition of a partnership to clearly set out the various types of joint working activities the council is engaged in. This has included revising the financial threshold for a significant partnership to £50,000 (*Working in Partnership Framework - paragraph 1.11*)
 - 2.2.2 Provisions for commencing partnership or joint working where there is an urgent need (ad hoc arrangements) (*Working in Partnership Framework - paragraph 1.11*).
 - 2.2.3 Clarification of the approval process for all forms of partnerships and joint working arrangements
 - 2.2.4 Reference to the council's revised Equalities Aims and Objectives and the requirement for new partnership arrangements to demonstrate how they are able to contribute to these (*Working in Partnership Framework - paragraph 2.4*).
 - 2.2.5 Reference to the council's Climate Change commitment, ensuring consideration is given to how a partnership may support the borough in mitigating climate change (*Working in Partnership Framework - paragraph 2.5*).
 - 2.2.6 A detailed breakdown of the governance requirements for shared working arrangements (*Working in Partnership Framework - paragraph 4.6*).
 - 2.2.7 Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of council Officers and Members with regards to partnerships and joint working arrangements that the council has engaged in (*Working in Partnership Framework – section 5*).
 - 2.2.8 Updates to the annual review process for partnerships and shared working arrangements to reflect the introduction of a revised approach for reviewing shared service arrangements from year three onwards (*Working in Partnership Framework - paragraph 6.6 and 6.7*).
- 2.3 The amendments suggested by the Performance & Administration Committee have been incorporated into the draft Framework shown at appendix two.

3. Adoption and review of the Working in Partnership Framework

- 3.1 The Working in Partnership Framework will continue to be reviewed at least once every three years, or unless deemed necessary during this period, with the outcomes of this review reported to Cabinet and Council accordingly. As previously agreed by the Cabinet and Full Council, changes which do not have a material effect on the document and its content will require only Cabinet approval.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the updated Working in Partnership Framework, shown at appendix two to this report, be formally adopted by the Council for inclusion within the council's policy framework.

4. Background Papers

4.1 There are no background papers pertaining to this report.

IMPLICATIONS	APPENDIX 1
Legal	There are no legal implications arising from this. As a requirement of the council's Working in Partnership Framework, all potential partnership opportunities and shared working arrangements are formally considered by the Monitoring Officer to ensure that the legal aspects of proposals are taken into account prior to entering into a new arrangement.
Finance and Value for Money	Partnerships and shared working arrangements can present financial and value for money savings to the council. The council's Working in Partnership Framework requires all potential partnership opportunities and shared working arrangements to be formally considered by the Section 151 Officer to ensure that the financial aspects of all proposals are taken into account prior to entering into a new partnership.
Risk Assessment	<p>Partnerships and shared working arrangements are becoming more and more prevalent in the work of the council and the efficient and effective delivery of services and corporate objectives. It is therefore important that the council has a clear framework for identifying and progressing partnership and shared working opportunities to ensure those which truly assist in delivering the council's objectives and/or present an efficiency saving to the council are progressed.</p> <p>The council's Working in Partnership Framework requires all potential partnership opportunities and shared working arrangements to be risk assessed but also for the risk assessment process to be undertaken on a regular basis throughout the life of the arrangement.</p>
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<p><i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i></p> <p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of personal data or special category data or criminal offence data? No</p> <p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? N/A</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk. N/A</p>
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. No</p>

IMPLICATIONS	APPENDIX 1
	<p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer.</p> <p>No</p> <p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
Corporate Plan	The Working in Partnership Framework provides provisions for all partnership and joint working arrangements across the council and therefore supports delivery of all council objectives.
Climate Change	There are no climate change implications arising from this report.
Crime and Disorder	The Working in Partnership Framework will be used for the development of all new partnerships and will therefore pick up any issues relating to the Crime and Disorder Act.
Digital and website implications	There are no digital or website implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	Consideration of Safeguarding implications has been built into the process for implementing and revising partnerships, as set out in the <i>Working in Partnership</i> Framework.